

Application No. 09/996,681

REMARKS

Applicants have carefully considered the rejections of the Examiner in the present application. In light of this consideration, Applicants believe that the claims, as amended, are allowable. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the rejection of the claims now pending in the application.

In this first Office Action of January 2, 2004, claims 1 and 3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,117,347, to Ishida (hereinafter Ishida). Claim 21 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,302,554, to Kashiwa et al. (hereinafter Kashiwa). Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ishida in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,726,879, to Bondur et al. (hereinafter Bondur). Claims 4-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ishida in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,184,570, to MacDonald, Jr. et al. (hereinafter MacDonald). Claims 7-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ishida in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,363,201, to Sherrer, et al. (hereinafter Sherrer). Claim 22 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kashiwa in view of Bondur. Claims 23-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kashiwa in view of Sherrer.

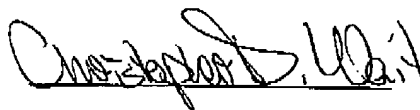
Claims 10-20 have been indicated as allowed. The Applicant's wish to express their appreciation to the Examiner for this indication of allowable subject matter. Independent claims 1 and 21 have been amended in view of the allowed claims 10-20 and are believed to now overcome the cited references. Allowance of claims 1 and 21 is respectfully requested. Claims 2, 4-6, 7-9, and 22-26 depend from claims now believed to be allowable and should now be allowable as well. Allowance of claims 2, 4-6, 7-9, and 22-26 is respectfully requested.

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No additional fee is believed to be required for this amendment; however, the undersigned Xerox Corporation attorney authorizes the charging of any necessary fees, other than the issue fee, to Xerox Corporation Deposit Account No. 24-0025.

It is respectfully submitted that the present set of claims, as amended, are patentably distinct over the cited references. In the event the Examiner considers personal contact advantageous to the disposition of this case, he is hereby requested to call the undersigned attorney at (585) 423-6918, Rochester, NY.

Respectfully submitted,



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